



Security Expo: Safeguarding facilities and employees with technology

The future of physical security at government facilities and national laboratories is rapidly progressing beyond the cliché of gates, guns and guards, and is quickly being replaced by radars, sensors and cameras.

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, a plethora of advanced security technologies – including long- and short-range radar systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, and armored vehicles – has been developed by commercial companies to assist security professionals and law enforcement agencies in protecting valuable assets at risk to the terrorist threat.

Research and demonstration efforts ongoing at the U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory are looking at ways in which these technologies and others can be incorporated into daily security operations at laboratories and federal facilities across the country.

"I think the important thing to keep in mind is the adversaries don't stand still when technologies are being developed," said Mike Sparks, director of the DOE Office of Technology. "The adversary has full use of the technology in advance to being made. And if we stand still and don't take the initiative to stay a step ahead on the technology, I think we're setting ourselves up for a disaster sometime down in the future."

Earlier this summer, INL, in cooperation with DOE's Office of Security and Safety Performance Assurance and the Office of Nuclear Energy, held a two-day technology exposition in which more than 20 emerging technologies were demonstrated to some of the federal government's highest security professionals.

The event provided attendees with information about the advantages offered by the deployment of advanced technologies, including early detection of threats, greater response time to threats by security guards, and a long-term reduction in operating costs.

Technology is the wave of the future for physical security protection, according to Lynn Goldman, INL's deputy director for National and Homeland Security.

"We just can't continue to keep adding more and more officers even though they do a great job. We've got to find more efficient ways where they can be out of harm's way and still protect the material."



And officials at INL and DOE both agree that integrating technology with physical security policies has the potential to save lives, something they say is the most important advantage.